KENAN HATIPOGLU, Dept. of Electrical and Computer Engineering, West Virginia University Institute of Technology, Beckley, WV, 25801, SANISH RAI, Dept. of Computer Science and Information Systems, West Virginia University Institute of Technology, Beckley, WV, 25801, and YOGENDRA M. PANTA, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering, West Virginia University Institute of Technology, Beckley, WV, 25801. NSF S-STEM Project Initiation: Supporting Undergraduate Cohorts of Career-Ready Engineering and Science Scholars (SUCCESS) Project at WVU Tech.

The SUCCESS project was recently funded by NSF Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Program (S-STEM). Our project aims to increase student persistence in STEM fields at West Virginia University Institute of Technology (WVU Tech) over its 5-year duration. Our project provides scholarships with varieties of student support services to the participant students to the program. Not only our support service includes faculty/technical expert from industry/ peer mentoring but also offer some exciting opportunities including cohort shared living and academic experiences; undergraduate research experiences; career exploration; and participation in discipline-specific conferences. Initially, we plan to sponsor for 20 full-time undergraduate students "Scholars" who will pursue bachelor's degrees either in Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) or in Computer Science and Information Systems (CSIS). The so-called Scholars will be ideally selected as academically talented, low-income, full-time first-time freshmen through a rigorous selection process. To build a business mindset, the Scholars will be supported/encouraged to choose a minor in Entrepreneurial Studies. By connecting Scholars to professional mentors, the project will enhance partnerships between STEM programs and local industries in the state. The project website was built, and applications will be accepted until May 1st, 2021. We are recruiting our first cohort of Scholars for the fall semester of 2021. We hope to update the project progress annually to the WV community at WVAS Annual Meetings. This project is funded by NSF DUE S-STEM Program from 2021-2026.